

THE
REPORT
REPORTED:

OR, THE
Weakness and Injustice
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CONVOCAATION
IN THEIR
CENSURE

OF THE
Lord Bp. of Bangor,
Examin'd and Expos'd.

Judge righteous Judgment.

The Second Edition.

L O N D O N,

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By John and Thomas.

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1714



T H E
R E P O R T
R E P O R T E D , &c.



HERE are many Things which make Religious Disputes irksome and unpleasant to good Men, but nothing more than these Two.

I. When those Disputes happen to embark the Passions on either Side in the Quarrel ; and to run up the Disputants to indecent and unbecoming Extremes ; as is too often the Case in these Times ; and particularly in the present Case before us ;

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in which we particularly see the Reverend Dr. *Snape* acting a Part most notoriously unbecoming the Candor and Charity of a Christian Minister, and remote even from that of a Gentleman: Of these Things I have only this gentle, soft Admonition to give from the Scripture, *viz.* *That where there is Strife and Contention, there is Confusion and every evil Work; For the Wrath of Men worketh not the Righteousness of God.*

2. When these Disputes, thus carried on to such Extremes, are occasioned by Things of small Consequence, far from being equal to the Manner of the Strife, and much more unequal to the Hazard Religion it self runs in the Broil.

These Quarrels are also very unwelcome to those, who have a sincere Regard to Religion; because they are generally begun, and for some Time at first, carried on chiefly among the *Clergy Men*, who professing to be Ministers of the *Gospel of Peace*, not only ought to be more concerned for giving any Offence, and be more studious to avoid it, than any other; but ought to be more especially solicitous to shun the Scandal of being given to Strife, and of being Promoters of Contention among the Churches of Christ.

Let

Let this Reproof fall where it will, I am unconcerned as to that; while the Offence is really given, there is nothing can excuse those, whose peculiar Business it is to prevent such Things, if they are the Men that lay the Foundation of it; All these unhappy Circumstances abound in the Dispute now before us; and therefore I must be allowed to speak with Plainness to it, fall where it will: Nothing can be more surprising, than to find not only several Divines, but the great and venerable Body of the Convocation, embarked in it: The Right Reverend the Bishop of *Bangor*, in his Sermon before the King, and in some other of his Writings, has advanced, or laid down some Propositions, in different Terms from the Customary Way of expressing such Things; But not at all, as I can see, differing from the true Intent and right Construction of the Things themselves; and yet such is the Force of Misconstruction; so wedded is Mankind to their own Way of expressing themselves, that not single Authors, not common Scribblers, not even the Reverend Dr. *Snape* only, but the whole Body of the Convocation; I mean

mean the Lower House of Convocation;
fall upon him with *Heat and Flame*;
NOTE. If I do presume to borrow
Words from the Bishop, to put to other
Meaning than his Lordship intended
them; I do no more than Dr. *Snape*
has legitimated the Practice of before
me, with a much worse Meaning.

The Doctor began with him; but
instead of pungent Truth and power-
ful Arguments to repel the Propositions
laid down by the Bishop, he either says
the same Thing the Bishop says, only
putting it into other Words; Or
perverts what the Bishop said, wresting
it, and straining it to quite another
Sense than the Words will bear; or to
different Meaning from what it is ap-
parent the Bishop intended them;
mixing his Discourse also with such
Language, such Sarcastick, and unwor-
thy Banter, and *in a Word*, Rudeness,
as greatly exposes him (*the Doctor*) to
the Censure of wise and indifferent
Men; at the same Time letting us
all know, that either he did not under-
stand the Bishop, or that he very little
understands himself; But in both these,
he has been so well handled, and his
empty Pamphlet is so happily exposed
by

by other Pens, that I need not give the Reader any more Trouble about it, than to referr to the Pamphlets already written upon that Subject; such as *The Layman's Second Letter to the Bishop: The Honour and Prerogative of Christ's Church Vindicated*; and several others of that Kind,

But neither the Clearness of the Propositions laid down by my Lord of *Bangor*, nor the ill Success that the Doctor has had in the Attack he has made upon them, has at all deterred the Lower House of Convocation from a formal Attack, by Way of Representation to the upper House; and albeit that the Government, as much as in them lies, to quiet the Minds of the People, agitated by these unseasonable Disputes, have interposed; and the King's Writ of Prorogation, which was sent down just in the interim, has for the present put a Stop to the Proceedings; yet the Committee appointed for the considering of proper Heads to lay to the Charge of the Bishop, in a Representation, having made their Report, and drawn up the same, some body, whether with, or without the Order and Consent of the said *Lower House*,
hath

hath published it to the World; This I say the rather, because it is not said any where in the Report, that this Publication is done by Order of the Convocation it self: That it is the Representation which was intended to be presented, we doubt not; but that it is published by their Direction, does not appear; So that now it is become an officious *Libel*, to say no worse of it, thrown out into the World as a Bone of Strife, farther to embroil Mankind, and to perpetuate that Strife which is already begun, and which is in it self so hateful to all good Men.

This Representation of the Convocation, had it really pass'd the Lower House, and been received by the Upper House, would, *no doubt*, have admitted such Learned Debates there, and the Bishop of *Bangor*, as well as others of our Right Reverend Prelates, would have spoken so largely and learnedly to it, that there can be no Room to doubt, but it would have been much better exposed there, *than any other Way*; and therefore it cannot be admitted, as some would insinuate, that the Prorogation was sent down as a Favour to the Bishop; But rather, I must

must take it to be a Favour to the Lower House; And we have good Reason to see, that his Majesty has had only the Publick Peace in View by this Prorogation; *In a Word*, the King has acted the most tender and Paternal Part, as well to the Nation, as to the Church it self, in thus putting an End to the farther Proceedings in this Matter, giving them Time to cool the *Heat* and *Flame*, which had agitated them so much, and to consider better of Things; preventing thereby the Mischiefs which ordinarily attend Disputes of that Nature, the Scandal to Religion, the Uneasiness among good Men, and the Advantages given to the Enemies of the Church by such unhappy Breaches; and we have great Reason to acknowledge the Wisdom and Penetration of his Majesty's Councils in this Case.

It would be a Question, which would favour of too much Bitterness, if I should enquire here, how it comes to pass, that the Convocation, passing by so many Heretical, Atheistical, Prophane, and blasphemous Books, as are every Day published, and spread about, to poyson the Principles, and debauch the

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Practice

Practice of a People, easy to be imposed upon, should single out this only to take Offence at, which, at the worst, has not so direct a Tendency to destroy Religion it self, or to ruine the Morals of the People, as those other Books have; and I am loth to take so much liberty to suggest, that the Convocation, consisting of so many Reverend Persons, should shew less concern for the miserable Growth of Atheism, Infidelity, and all manner of Licentiousness among the Nation, to the Defacing the Reverence for true Piety in the Minds of Men, than they would for an Attack upon the Power and Authority of the Heads of the Church, in Matters of Government and Discipline, supposing this part had been attackt, which nevertheless I do not grant.

But since the Convocation has thought fit to let pass so many corrupt and violent Attacks upon the very Life and Being of Religion, and have singled out this of the Bishop's System of Church-Authority, I shall, without making any other Reflections than the Nature of the Thing directly leads to,

to, and exorts from me, enquire a little into the great and grievous Offence which the Bishop has given.

The Complaint is divided into Two short Heads, which form the Charge against the Bishop, and are deducted from his Sermon Preach'd before the King, and publish'd by His Majesty's Command, Entitled, *The Nature of the Kingdom or Church of Christ*: And a Book published some time before, Entitled, *A Preservative against the Principles and Practices of the Non-jurors, &c.* of which, say these Reverend Fathers, the Tendency of the Doctrines and Positions contained in them is conceived to be.

(1.) *First*, To subvert all Government and Discipline in the Church of CHRIST, and to reduce his Kingdom to a State of *Anarchy* and *Confusion*.

(2.) *Secondly*, To impugn and impeach the regal Supremacy in Causes Ecclesiastical, and the Authority of the Legislature to enforce Obedience in Matters of Religion, by Civil Sanctions.

To make good the first of these, they recite the Words in the Bishop's Sermon, *Pag. 11.* as follows.

His Lordship affirms — ‘ As the
 ‘ Church of *Christ* is the Kingdom of
 ‘ *Christ*, He Himself is King : And in
 ‘ this it is implied, That he is Himself
 ‘ the sole Lawgiver to his Subjects, and
 ‘ Himself the sole Judge of their Beha-
 ‘ viour, in the Affairs of Conscience
 ‘ and eternal Salvation : And, in this
 ‘ Sense therefore, His Kingdom is not
 ‘ of this World ; That He hath, in those
 ‘ Points, left behind Him no visible hu-
 ‘ mane Authority, no Vicegerents,
 ‘ who can be said, properly, to supply
 ‘ his Place ; no Interpreters upon
 ‘ whom his Subjects are absolutely to
 ‘ depend ; no Judges over the Conscien-
 ‘ ces or Religion of his People.

Which will be confirmed by the Pas-
 sage next to be produced, *Pag. 15, 16.*
 ‘ If therefore the Church of *Christ* be
 ‘ the Kingdom of *Christ* ; it is essential
 ‘ to it, That Christ himself be the sole
 ‘ Lawgiver, and sole Judge of his Sub-
 ‘ jects, in all Points relating to the Fa-
 ‘ vour or Displeasure of Almighty God ;
 and,

' and, That all his Subjects, in what
 ' Station soever they may be, are equal-
 ' ly Subjects to Him ; and that no one
 ' of them, any more than another, hath
 ' Authority either to make new Laws
 ' for Christ's Subjects, or to impose a
 ' Sense upon the old ones, which is
 ' the same Thing ; or to Judge, cen-
 ' sure, or Punish the Servants of ano-
 ' ther Master, in Matters relating pure-
 ' ly to Conscience, or Salvation. If a-
 ' ny Person hath any other Notion, ei-
 ' ther through a long Use of Words
 ' with inconsistent Meanings, or thro'
 ' a Negligence of Thought ; let him
 ' but ask himself, Whether the Church
 ' of Christ, be the Kingdom of Christ,
 ' or not : And, if it be, Whether this
 ' Notion of it doth not absolutely ex-
 ' clude all other Legislators and Judges,
 ' in Matters relating to Conscience, or
 ' the Favour of God ; Or, Whether it
 ' can be his Kingdom, if any mortal
 ' Men have such a Power of Legislation
 ' and Judgment in it.

To the same Sense he speaks, *Pag.*
 25. — ' No one of his Subjects is
 ' Lawgiver and Judge over others of
 ' them, in Matters relating to Salva-
 ' tion, but He alone.

Of

Of these Expressions, the Report says, expressly thus: This Passage seems to deny all Authority to the Church, and under pretence of Exalting the Kingdom of Christ, to leave it without any visible humane Authority to judge, censure, or punish Offenders, in the Affairs of Conscience and eternal Salvation.

If the Doctrine contain'd in these Passages be admitted, there neither is, nor hath been since our Saviour's Time, any Authority in the Christian Church, in Matters relating to Conscience and Salvation; not even in the Apostles themselves: But all Acts of Government in such Cases, have been an Invasion of Christ's Authority, and an Usurpation upon his Kingdom.

As my Lord of *Bangor's* Positions are laid down with great Authority as Doctrinal Points, assur'd by such Evidence as that they could not be opposed; so with no less Authority and positive Affirmation, do the Reverend Fathers here, lay down their Censure: *If the Doctrine contained in these Passages be admitted, there neither is, nor hath been*
since

since our Saviour's Time, any Authority in the Christian Church, &c.

I know not what to say to Men, who in so absolute a Manner take upon them to lay down Positions, as if they were Mathematically demonstrated, when at the same time they admit many Doubts and Exceptions, and without question this is the Case here ; for I take the Liberty to lay down another Assertion, which, I believe, may be with much more Modesty affirmed, because more capable to be proved, viz. that though *the Doctrine contained in these Passages be admitted*, nevertheless *there is, and hath been some Authority in the Christian Church, &c.*

Had the Report said, *that if this Doctrine be admitted*, There neither is, nor has been since our Saviour's Time, so much Authority in the Christian Church, as the Members and Leaders of the said Church have assumed, practised, and pretended to claim ; but that the said Members and Leaders of the said Christian Church, having in all Ages, and at this time, invaded the Privileges of the Subjects of *Christ's Kingdom*, and usurped that Authority which our Blessed Lord never deputed or delegated

legated to any Men or Body of Men on Earth; had they said thus, as it had been attended with great Modesty, so it would have been readily granted, and then it might have remained only to have enquired, whether those Doctrines laid down by my Lord of *Bangor* were to be admitted or no. But to affirm, that if they are to be admitted, there is no Authority at all left in the *Christian Church*, is a Flight so high, as cannot be reasonably deduced from the Bishop's Propositions; and this I take to be evident in my Lord of *Bangor's* own Words, which all that have hitherto cavilled at, either mistake, or wilfully pervert.

I shall by no means attempt here to vindicate my Lord Bishop's Positions, or explain his Words; my Lord is equal to all his Opposers, and shall be at full Liberty to support his own Propositions his own Way, as I am satisfied he can easily do. But it is the unfair and unjust Usage of him by his Opposers that I shall expose, as what will best confute them; for it is evident, that they do not take his Lordship's Words as they lye; and I have therefore nothing to do, but to remove the Fallacy in
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in arguing, which I find used by his Opposers, to fix their Charge upon him with the more seeming Authority.

First. I Note my Lord of *Bangor* does not say Christ Jesus has left no Instructions, no Directions to his Ministers and Servants for the Ministration of Gospel Ordinances, no Expositors, or Interpreters of his Word, and of the Doctrines of the Gospel; no Authority to put the Laws which he has left in Execution; It is plain, our Blessed Lord has given Ministers to his Church, *some Apostles, some Prophets, some Evangelists, some Pastors and Teachers*; And they have their known Work, their Instructions, and their Authority; which the Bishop, as he cannot, so he does no where deny; But what is this to the Case? Have these any such Authority, as that they may be said properly to supply the Place of our Saviour Jesus Christ; which is what the Bishop says they have not; or on which, the Subjects of Christ's Kingdom, his Church, may absolutely depend?

This the Convocation, no, nor any other of the Bishop's Opposers, do not touch upon, to put it in clear Terms,

so as to admit no Cavil: The Bishop evidently here opposes the Insult upon the King-ship and Power of Jesus Christ in his Church, by the *Papal* Hierarchy, and usurped by all Ecclesiastick Polity, which is established upon the Supposition of Human Infallibility; the Words are plain, *No Humane Authority that may be said properly to supply the Place of Christ*: What is this less or more, than that Man of Sin mentioned in the *2 Thessalonians 2. 4. Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, &c.* But the Mystery is, how this can infer, that there *neither is, or has been, ANY Authority in the Christian Church*: Again, take the Bishop's Words, *No Interpreter, upon whom his Subjects ARE ABSOLUTELY to depend*; What can be plainer than this is, to signify what all *Protestant* Bishops profess, *viz.* That the Power of absolutely determining the Faith of a Member of Christ's Church, and of infallibly interpreting or judging of the Meaning of the Scriptures, is not delegated by our Lord to any humane Authority; no, not to the Church itself: So that there is no absolute Sovereign, nor any infallible Judge in the Church

Church of Christ ; which is true *Protestant* Doctrine, which our first Reformers established, which the whole Body of the Church of *England* Clergy have always professed, and which the Glorious Army of Martyrs, at the said Reformation, maintained in Flames of Fire.

To say then, because we allow no infallible Interpreter, and no Person on Earth to be properly said to supply the Place of Jesus Christ in his Sovereignty over his Church, is to take away ALL Authority from any in the Church ; to affirm, that no Power can be given to any of the Subjects of a Kingdom, in the Absence of the King, unless all the Power which the King himself had be given ; which would be indeed to make those to whom that Power was so given, to be really *Kings*, not Subjects ; as the Bishop himself very happily observes in the Case of those, who pretend to be vested with Christ's Authority.

As such Inferences as these are highly unjust to my Lord of *Bangor*, so I cannot but say, they seem to be manifestly absurd in themselves ; the Bishop no where attempting to destroy the

just Ministerial Authority, with which any of the Subjects of Christ are evidently cloathed in his Church; But the Invasion of Christ's own uncommunicated Authority; the usurping that Power, which he never thought fit to entrust any of his Subjects with: This he repels with a just and successful Force; and affirms, *what is most true*, viz. That no Humane Power upon Earth is vested with such Authority.

As in this, his Lordship has particularly opposed the Usurpations of the Church of *Rome*, and all the *Popish* Pretences to a Sovereign Power, and Domination in the Church of God; so has he in those other Assertions, of Christ's being the only Lawgiver and Judge, repelled effectually all the Encroachments of Persecutors, whether *Popish* or *Protestant*; all the Usurpations upon the Authority of Jesus Christ, in making Penal Laws to bind the Consciences of Men, and inflicting Punishments upon those, who, in Obedience to the Dominion of Conscience, could not conform to those Laws; and so absurd are the Opposers of this righteous Doctrine, that they can censure the Bishop for saying, that no humane

mane Power has a Right to judge, censure, or punish in Matters purely relating to Conscience or Salvation, and yet quote the very Scripture at the same time in the 4th Chapter of the *Acts*, *Whether it be meet to obey God rather than Men, judge ye*: This is the Justice and Modesty with which Dr. *Snape*, in particular, treats the Bishop.

Nor is the Convocation less unaccountable, or less injurious, in saying, that if the Power of Persecution be taken away, all Acts of Government are a Usurpation upon Christ's Kingdom; For this is the true Sense and Meaning of their Words: The Bishop argues most justly, that as *Christ Jesus* is the King and Head of his Church, so he is the only Sovereign Lord of the Conscience, no humane Power having any deputed Authority over it; and consequently all Coercion in Points meerly conscientious and religious, are Invasions of his Dominion over the Conscience, which, I hope, every good Christian would willingly subscribe to.

The Convocation, in Answer to this, says, *That then there neither is, or has been since our Saviour, any Authority in the Christian Church*; They might
as

as well have argued, that there *neither is, or has been since our Saviour's Time, any Christian Church in the World:* Can it follow as a Consequence, that there is no Authority at all in the *Christian Church*, because that Authority is not absolute, unlimited, and equal to that of *Christ Himself*? Is this a just Inference, that because the Power of *Christ's* Ministers is limited; that therefore they have no Authority at all? And does it follow, that because the dignified Subjects of *Christ's* Kingdom, have not a compleat Deputation of all his Authority, that therefore they have no Authority at all? And that there is no Subordination of Offices in his Church?

The Injustice of these Things speak themselves; God, who is the God of Order, has, as by the Scripture is manifest, committed the dispensing his Ordinances to the proper Officers, whom he has given to his Church: The Authority he has given them to plant Churches, to teach, instruct, baptize, direct, exhort, is fairly derived from, and proved in the Scriptures; and yet does not at all interfere with the Doctrine, which the Bishop of *Bangor* has

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has here advanced, of the absolute Government of Conscience being not committed to them.

It is evident by the Scripture, that no such Power was ever deputed even to the Apostles themselves; neither is there any one Example in the whole New-Testament, whenever any one of the Apostles exercised such Authority, or offer'd to do Violence to the Consciences of any; and be the Convocation as jealous as they will of the usurp'd Power which some of them have formerly practised, if it be overthrown by Scripture Authority it must fall.

But, says the *Report*, Fol. 6. ' These
' Doctrines naturally tend to breed
' in the Minds of the People, a dis-
' regard to those who are appointed
' to Rule over them.

But the *Report* does not offer to prove that there are any who are really appointed to rule over us *in the Terms of the Question*; and indeed, it is nothing more or less but departing from the *Terms of the Question*, which has occasioned this Dispute. The Convocation speaks of such in the Church of Christ, who are appointed

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to Rule over the People, but does not say in what such are to Rule; whereas, on the other hand, the Bishop's Words are fair and explicit, *viz.* That we are to be subject to none but *Christ*, in the great Affairs of *Conscience* and *Eternal Salvation*: He does not say, We are not to be subject to them in Discipline and Government? If this is not plain on one side; why then does not the Convocation on the other side tell us, who they are that are *appointed to Rule over us* in the Affairs of *Conscience* and *Eternal Salvation*? The Bishop does not deny, but that, as above, there may be some appointed to Rule over us in Matters of Government and Discipline: But he denies that any are deputed to Rule over us in Matters of *Conscience* and *Salvation*, except our Lord Jesus Christ alone, whose Subjects we are; and this they do not say one Word to; so that, in a Word, they censure the Bishop without confuting him; and affirm, without arguing the Truth of Fact, that the Bishop removes all Power from the Christian Church.

Alike

Alike absurd, is the Retort they make upon the Profession made by his Lordship at his Consecration, which, in my Opinion, is really nothing at all to the Purpose: But let others judge of it; the Words are these:

‘ By the Help of God, to *correct and punish*, according to such Authority as he hath by God’s Word, and as should be committed to him by the Ordinance of this Realm, such as be unquiet, disobedient, and criminal, in his Diocese.

What is this to the Case in hand? Indeed, nothing at all; Any Christian Magistrate may make such a Profession, to *correct and punish* according to such Authority as is given him by the Word of God; but does this prove that the Word of God gives him Authority to *correct and punish in Matters of Conscience*? It may give such Authority in Matters of Discipline, subordination of Place, and several other Cases; but if it is not so in Matters of *Conscience*, then they have said nothing at all; and if there is any such Authority given a Bishop by the Word of God, why did they not shew us

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where

where it is so given, and by whom? Which till they do, all the rest of that Part is nothing but an empty Sound of unconsidered Words.

The blessed Apostle St. Paul says of his own Ministry, *Knowing the Terrors of the Lord, we persuade Men*; but nowhere says, we force Men, we persecute Men: Speaking of the Office of a Bishop, 1 *Tim. iii. 5.* he says, he is to *Take care of the Church of God*; but not that he is to persecute any for differing Opinions, points of Conscience, and Matters concerning eternal Salvation; neither is the coercive Authority over Conscience, which we see exercised by the Popish Church, and too much by some Protestants, by any means to be justified from Scripture Authority, from the Practice of the Apostles, or from the Nature of the Thing; and not to run out here into all the Objections which the lower House are pleased to make to my Lord of Bangor's Words, as particularly, his allowing *Personal Persuasion* to be a sufficient Guide and Authority to Opinion, which, however, they do not refute; yet this I must observe, that they go on in the same manner in them all,

all, to assert things of his Lordship, which are not at all to be inferred in consequence of his Discourse; as in particular, that his Lordship *has left no difference between the Popish and our reform'd Church, but what is founded in Personal Persuasion only, and not in the Truth of the Doctrines, or in the Excellency of one Communion above the other;* which is a manifest wresting of the Bishop's Words, to a Sense quite different from what others understand them in, and what we think they will bear; for besides what other Meaning the Bishop may have in those Words, in which Case, his Lordship ought in justice to have the Explaining of his own Writing; I cannot but think they may be justly said to bear this Observation; *viz. That Persuasion of the Errors of the Church of Rome, and Persuasion of the Truth of the Protestant Principles, on which the Reformation was founded, and the Church of England erected, justified the Protestants in separating from Popery, and in pursuing the Reformation;* but this is far from being the Foundation of the real Difference; it is one thing to be the Foundation of the Difference,

and another Thing to be the Foundation of the differing ; The Difference between the Church of *Rome*, and our Reformed Church, is founded in the Errors of the Church of *Rome* ; the reforming and separating from those Errors, was founded in the *personal Persuasion* of the Reformers ; and this alone, says my Lord of *Bangor*, justified the Reformation ; But he does not say, that this is the *only* Foundation of the Difference.

How is it possible that a Body of Protestant Divines, met together in so numerous a Synod, could, *nemine contradicente*, pass by Vote such a sophistical, unfair Inference as this is, let any one read sedately, and judge impartially the Bishop's Words, and which the *Report* quotes as the Ground of their Censure, they will soon see whether they have done his Lordship Justice or not. The Bishop's Words, Page 85. of his *Preservative*, and quoted Folio 8. in the *Report*, are these. " What is it that
 ' justified the Protestants — in setting
 ' up their own Bishops ? Was it, That
 ' the *Popish* Doctrines and Worship
 ' were actually corrupt, or that the
 ' Protestants were perswaded in their
 ' own

' own Consciences; that they were so?
 ' The Latter without doubt: As appears
 ' from this *Demonstration*; Take away
 ' from them this Perswasion, they are so
 ' far from being justified, that they are
 ' condemned for their Departure; give
 ' them this Perswasion again, they are
 ' condemned if they do not separate:
 ' Or, in another Manner, suppose a Pa-
 ' pist not perswaded of that Corruption
 ' to separate, he is, for the Want of that
 ' *Perswasion alone*, condemned: Suppose
 ' a Protestant, or one thoroughly per-
 ' swaded of that Corruption, to separate,
 ' and he is justified in so doing; or not
 ' to separate, and he is condemn'd.

All this is a Declaration indeed, that
 a firm Perswasion of the Errors of a
 Church, is a Justification of the Persons
 so perswaded, in separating from that
 Church, but does not infer, that there
 is no other Difference, or that it leaves
 no Difference between the Church
 separating, and the Church separated
 from, but what is founded in Opinion
 or Perswasion; for it allows just Diffe-
 rences to be the Foundation of that
 Perswasion.

It is true, that what my Lord of
Bangor inferrs from these Premisses, op-
 presses

presses the Reverend Fathers of the Lower House very much, as it destroys that beloved Power of Coertion, which some of the Clergy have with much Art preserved in their Hands for many Ages, & are indeed very loth to part with. The Words are these. ‘ If this were
 ‘ duly and impartially considered, it
 ‘ would be impossible for Men, to un-
 ‘ christian, unchurch, or declare, out
 ‘ of God’s Favour, any of their *Fellow-*
 ‘ *Creatures*, upon any lesser, or indeed
 ‘ any other Consideration, than that
 ‘ of a wicked Dishonesty and Insincerity;
 ‘ of which, in these Cases, God
 ‘ alone is Judge.

I cannot in so short a Compass as I am here confined to, enlarge upon these Things, otherwise much more might be said to support what the Bishop has said against the Persecution of Persons separating upon personal Perswasion; besides, the Occasion which the Lower House seem to have their Eye upon, being at present, as I am apt to believe, adjourned to a further Distance from our View; I mean, the releasing the several Bodies of Dissenters from the Penalties and Obligations of unqualifying Laws; I say, that Design seem-
 ing

ing at present to be laid aside, Time may afford Occasion to touch it more largely, and apply it even to the Convocation it self more fully hereafter.

But the second Article against the Bishop of *Bangor* must not so be pass'd over : Here he is charg'd by the *Report*, That he ' *impugns* and *impeaches* the ' Regal Supremacy in Causes Ecclesi- ' astical, and the Authority of the Le- ' gislature, to inforce Obedience in ' Matters of Religion, by Civil Sancti- ' ons.

That my Lord of *Bangor* does impeach the Regal Supremacy, as it is now claimed and pretended to, *that is to say*, the Exercise of an humane Authority in God's Church, for which there is no Scripture Institution, is most true ; and in this, the Question will not so much lie in the Fact, as in the Merit of the Case, *viz.* Whether the Regal Supremacy, as it has been exercised in these Kingdoms, and as some Men would insist upon its being still exercised, be a just Authority, founded in Scripture, and consonant to the Laws of Christ in the Government of his Church, or an Invasion and Usurpation of his just Rights, and that uncommunicated re-
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serv'd Power, which no humane Power has any Right or Pretence to.

The Bishop affirms it is the latter ; and they must and ought to dispute this Point with his Lordship, before they take upon them to say, that what he insists upon under that Head, is destructive of the Legislative Power, as also of the Regal Supremacy.

What I offer in this part of the Question is clear from the Bishop's Positions, and from the Profession of all the Protestant Churches ; nor does what the *Report* brings to the contrary impeach it, viz. that Christ Jesus is the only Supream Head of the Church ; and even those who are most zealous for the Regal Supremacy, are obliged to bring in the Exception used in our *Liturgy*, viz. *Under Thee and thy Christ* ; which some, even among themselves, have reflected on, as being Nonsense in *Terminis*, viz. a Supream under a Supream. That this Supremacy has been on many Occasions opposed, has been owing to the Error of those, who have extended it to a Length which *Christ Jesus* never gave Leave to have it extended to, that Kings, and just Powers, have *such Authority* in religious Mat-
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ters for the good Governante and Order of Things, as the Constitution of the Country, and the Consent of the Church, has given them a Claim to by the Laws of the Land; and this may be true, and is not at all deny'd by the Bishop; but that this Supremacy, as it is unjustly called, amounts to a Legislative Power in Christ's Kingdom, a Vicegerency or Representative Authority to act for, and in the Name of Christ, and thereby to exercise his Regal Administration, or any Part of it, by which I mean, *a judicial Authority over the Consciences of Men*; this every faithful Subject of the Kingdom of Christ must deny.

The Laws of this Land, one of which also the *Report* quotes, confirm that this was originally no otherwise understood; See the Words of the 17th Clause, 1 *Eliz. cap. 1 Sect. 17.* entituled, *Ecclesiastick Jurisdiction annexed to the Crown.*

That such Jurisdictions, Privileges, Superiorities, and Preeminences, Spiritual and Ecclesiastical, as by any Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Power or Authority hath
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heretofore been, or MAY LAWFULLY be exercised or used, for the Visitation of the Ecclesiastical State and Persons, and for Reformation, Order and Correction of the same, and of all manner of Errors, Heresies, Schisms, Abuses, Offences, Contempts, and Enormities, shall for ever, by Authority of this present Parliament, be united and annexed to the Imperial Crown of this Realm.

And again in the 18th Section, as follows.

—And to visit, reform, redress, order, correct and amend all such Errors, Heresies, Schisms, Abuses, Offences, Contempts and Enormities whatsoever, which by any manner of Spiritual or Ecclesiastical Power, Authority, or Jurisdiction, CAN OR MAY LAWFULLY be reformed, ordered, redressed, corrected, restrained, or amended, to the Pleasure of Almighty God, the Increase of Vertue, and the Conservation of the Peace and Unity of this Realm.

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By which it evidently appears, that these Laws were not founded upon the Decision of the Question, *viz.* whether the Legislative Authority could vest the Queen with a rightful Power in Ecclesiastick Causes or no; Nor perhaps did those Legislators enquire, whether the Word of God did give to the Crown any supreme Jurisdiction, Legislature or Exercise of Christ's Regal Authority, yea, or no; But they enacted such a Power to the Crown, *be it what it would*, as might lawfully be claimed, exercised, or made use of by the ancient Laws of the Land, and with the Pleasure of Almighty God; so that to bring any Laws, Statutes, or ancient Constitutions, to prove that the King has a Delegation of Christ's Regal Authority in the Church, is to say nothing; but to prove that if it is an Usurpation, it is so Nationally, and that it is not an Offence committed by the Kings and Queens only, in Accepting a Power they had no Right to, but in the Parliaments too, in giving, or pretending to give, a Power which they had no Authority to give.

But the Acts of Parliament effectually clear them both of the Charge;

for in all these cases, the Parliament have given only such Power as might Lawfully be exercised, *that is to say*, by the Word of God, the more Supreme Law; and all the Kings and Queens of *England* have thus accepted it. If any of them have exercised more Authority than they might Legally exercise, these are they alone, who the Bishop condemns, as Usurpers of the Authority of Christ, and taking upon them to be his Vicegerents, which he never gave them any Room to pretend to, or Authority to practise.

That such unlawful Authority has been exercised by the Crown, will not be contended, after the Legislature of the Kingdom has found it necessary to abolish the Oath, obliging the Subjects to recognize the King as supreme Head of *Christ's* Church at the Revolution; which Oath was then called the Oath of Supremacy, and was dropt out of the Constitution at the Revolution.

Those then who will censure the Bishop of *Bangor* for impugning the Regal Supremacy, should tell us first in what Sense that Supremacy is now under-

understood, and how far the Clergy have in time past given up, or not given up, the Regal Jurisdiction of Jesus Christ to the Usurpations of Men.

If the Regal Supremacy is now understood and exercised in any unscriptural, unjustifiable Manner, then to impugn it in its misconstrued and misunderstood Extent, and to restore the Supremacy of Christ in his Church to its full legal and natural Jurisdiction, is the Duty of a Christian Bishop; and the Convocation will be found defending and supporting not the Church of *Christ*, but the Usurpations and Invasions of ambitious, proud, and ignorant Men, when they censure my Lord of *Bangor*, for thus restoring the said Supremacy and Sovereignty of *Christ Jesus* to its full extent.

I might here go back to some of the former Conduct of the Convocation itself, I mean, as to the lower House in particular, when they have oppugn'd and ruffled the Regal Supremacy of the Sovereign: Witness some of their Disputes in the last Reign, and their pretending to call in question the said Supremacy as it was then Exercised upon themselves; in which, whether they
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did right or wrong, is not the Question; but whether it was lawful or not to oppose the abuse of Power lawfully assum'd, or the assuming more Power than is committed to the Crown; and it is sufficiently prov'd by those Proceedings of the Convocation to be lawful; and therefore I am satisfied in saying, that they are openly now condemning in the Bishop of *Bangor*, what they have allowed in themselves.

Much more might be laid to expose these Proceedings, and to shew how agreeable to Scripture and Reason, to the Nature of the Thing, and to the Practice of the primitive Churches, this Doctrine is which the Bishop of *Bangor* has advanced: But as this would be to enter upon a Defence of his Argument, which his Lordship is well able to do himself, and, I doubt not, will do it; I wave it at present, believing what is said here, will sufficiently shew the impartial considering Reader, how empty and trifling, as well as unjust and injurious, this Proceeding of the Lower-House hath been, and that his Majesty's putting

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a Stop to their further Exposing
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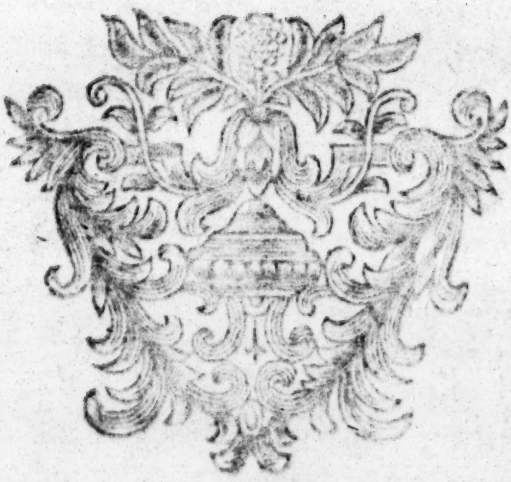
F I N I S.



a stop to their further Expanding
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